

July 6, 2011

FROM: MIKE SANCHEZ, Planning Manager  
Development & Resource Management Department

  
DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: CONSIDERATION OF A REQUEST BY THE SANGER UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT TO PROVIDE A RECOMMENDATION AND DETERMINATION OF GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY REGARDING THE PROPOSED PURCHASE OF 116 ACRES FOR A HIGH SCHOOL AND MIDDLE SCHOOL SITE ON THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF FOWLER AND JENSEN AVENUES, EXTENDING NORTHWARD TO EAST CHURCH AVENUE AND EASTWARD TO SOUTH ARMSTRONG AVENUE

## RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission take the following action:

RECOMMEND SUPPORT for the Sanger Unified School District (SUSD) acquisition and development of 116 acres for a high school and middle school campus, provided that:

- a. SUSD works with the City of Fresno on the General Plan Update (which will also update the Roosevelt Community Plan) to have the planned land uses of this acreage redesignated entirely to Public Facility – High School & Middle School for the school site; and
- b. SUSD satisfies the “Right-To-Farm” covenant required by the Fresno County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) for the “Church-Fowler No. 2 Reorganization” (the annexation) of the northerly three parcels of the proposed school site, and requests annexation of the entire school site to the City of Fresno to facilitate public service delivery; and
- c. SUSD consults with the City of Fresno on any necessary water supply infrastructure and provides for utility deemed necessary by the Department of Public Utilities pursuant to the Urban Growth Management program for fringe area development and street/pedestrian improvements as required by City Public Works Standards; and
- d. SUSD obtains building permits to properly cap off all water and sewer utility connections for properties being purchased and demolished, and to properly abandon any remnant individual water wells and on-site wastewater disposal systems which may remain or which may not have been properly abandoned by past owners.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

California Public Resources Code Section 21151.2 and Government Code Section 65402(c) require that school districts inform the local land use jurisdiction of intent to purchase and develop facilities; and that the local jurisdiction, in turn, provide a report to the school district within 30 days with a recommendation regarding site acquisition.

On June 13, 2011 Sanger Unified School District sent the attached letter requesting a Planning Commission report on SUSD’s proposed site for a new high school and middle school. The entire 116-acre site lies within the City of Fresno’s Sphere of Influence, and its northerly portion is already within City limits. The first exhibit attached to this report shows the boundaries of the proposed site and the

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annexation status of the nine parcels comprising the site. (SUSD is also consulting with the Fresno County Planning Commission, because the southerly portion of the site is not yet annexed to the City.)

Also attached to this report is a 2009 aerial photo from the SUSD Site Selection Study. (The entire 2011 Site Selection Study used by the District to choose this preferred alternative--"Site D"--is appended to this Report to the Planning Commission for additional background information.)

The land proposed to be acquired and used for a high school and middle school is currently planned for Medium and Medium-High Density Residential uses in the 2025 Fresno General Plan and in the Roosevelt Community Plan (please see attached map of planned land uses per the 2025 Fresno General Plan). The parcels proposed for SUSD acquisition are not currently designated for public facility land use, but when the Roosevelt Community Plan was adopted in 1992, the City did designate 40 acres nearby (on the southeast corner of Church and Armstrong Avenues) for Public Facility – High School use.

Because an update of the 2025 Fresno General Plan is currently being formulated, this is an opportune time for the school district to consult with the City on adjusting the planned school sites on the Roosevelt Community Plan land use map, to show the site(s) that SUSD is proposing to use for schools and to delete any sites that SUSD is not interested in utilizing.

Pursuant to an approved annexation, the "Church-Fowler No. 2 Reorganization," the northerly three parcels of the proposed school site (APNs 316-022-27S, 316-022-28S, and 316-022-30S) have already been annexed to the City of Fresno.

As documented in the Certificate of Completion for this annexation (copy attached), a Right-To-Farm Covenant is required to be filed for these parcels by the Local Agency Formation Commission. Sanger Unified would succeed to this requirement through its acquisition of the parcels which comprise approved Vesting Tentative Tract Map No. 5552/UGM; the subdivider filed the annexation application which resulted in the condition for filing of a covenant.

In order to provide for consistent provision of public services throughout the site, particularly for emergency response and safety services, it is being recommended that the entire school site (the six additional parcels proposed for SUSD's school site acquisition) be annexed to the City of Fresno.

The southeastern portion of the City's Sphere of Influence has well-documented challenges for supplying adequate potable water, including areas where the aquifer has low transmissivity (which limits urban well production capability) and elevated level of contamination with dibromochloropropane (DBCP). It is likely that this area will also exceed pending regulations for trichloropropane (TCP) in drinking water, a contaminant that typically occurs with DBCP and which is even more difficult to remove from drinking water. For those reasons, staff recommends that Sanger Unified consult closely with the City's Water Division on developing water supply and water treatment infrastructure needed to serve the demands of a high school and middle school campus.

Because proper abandonment of unused water wells and abandoned on-site waste disposal systems can prevent the spread of groundwater contamination (by removing direct paths for surface pollution to reach deeper, cleaner layers of the aquifer), permits for abandonment of remnant private wells on the proposed school site is also recommended, along with proper abandonment of any remnant on-site septic systems.

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### PROJECT INFORMATION

PROJECT	Request for a report on general plan consistency and related information for proposed acquisition of the subject property for use as a public high school and middle school campus		
APPLICANT	Sanger Unified School District		
LOCATION	In the Roosevelt Community Plan Area, on the northeast corner of South Fowler Avenue and East Jensen Avenues, extending northward to East Church Avenue and eastward to South Armstrong Avenue  <b>Council District 5, Sal Quintero</b>		
SITE SIZE	Approximately 116 total acres (9 parcels)		
PLANNED LAND USE	Existing	-	Medium Density Residential and Medium-High Density Residential
ZONING	Existing	--	R-1/UGM/ANX ( <i>Single Family Residential District, Urban Growth Management Area, Annexed Rural Residential Transitional Overlay</i> ); and AL-20 (County) ( <i>Limited Twenty-Acre Agricultural District</i> )
PLAN DESIGNATION AND CONSISTENCY	Pursuant to Table 2 (Planned Land Use and Zone District Consistency Matrix) of the 2025 Fresno General Plan and Edison Community Plan, the proposed high school and middle school use (Public Facility – High School & Middle School) would not be consistent with the site's current planned medium and medium-high density residential land uses.		
ENVIRONMENTAL FINDING	An environmental analysis will be prepared by SUSD for the acquisition and development of this middle school.		

### BORDERING PROPERTY INFORMATION

	Planned Land Use	Existing Zoning	Existing Land Use
North	Medium Density Residential (per the Fresno 2025 General Plan)	<b>R-1/UGM/ANX</b> <i>Single Family Residential District, Urban Growth Management Area, Annexed Rural Residential Transitional Overlay</i>	Rural residential and cultivated agricultural properties

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## BORDERING PROPERTY INFORMATION *(continued)*

	Planned Land Use	Existing Zoning	Existing Land Use
<b>East</b>	Public Facility, Medium Density Residential, Southeast Growth Area and Open Space-Ponding Basin (per the Fresno 2025 General Plan)	<b>AL-20</b> (Fresno County Zoning) <i>Limited Twenty-Acre Agricultural District</i>	PG&E Utility site, FMFCD Basin BL, and Rural residential and cultivated agricultural properties
<b>South</b>	Southeast Growth Area (per the Fresno 2025 General Plan)	<b>AL-20</b> (Fresno County Zoning) <i>Limited Twenty-Acre Agricultural District</i>	Cultivated agricultural properties and rural residential
<b>West</b>	Medium Density Residential  and  Community Commercial (per the 2025 Fresno General Plan)	<b>R-2/UGM</b> <i>Low-Density Multiple Family Residential District, Urban Growth Management Area</i> and  <b>AE-5/UGM</b> <i>Single Family Residential District, Urban Growth Management Area</i>	City of Fresno water well site (SW corner of Church & Fowler Ave.)  Single-family planned unit development  and  vacant land

## ENVIRONMENTAL FINDING

Pursuant to requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act and the California Department of Education, Sanger Unified School District is preparing an environmental assessment to more fully identify all issues and requirements related to protecting the health and safety of students attending this facility and for mitigating any potential adverse impacts on the environment posed by this campus.

## BACKGROUND / ANALYSIS

### Basis for recommendations

Objective E-28 of the 2025 Fresno General Plan directs the City to "Cooperate with and encourage all school districts within the metropolitan area to provide the educational facilities and programs necessary to meet the needs of the area's student population."

Sanger Unified School District currently does not have a general enrollment middle school serving its students in the immediate area, and as related in its June 13<sup>th</sup> letter, is in need of a high school campus

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site to serve students generated by development in Southeast Fresno. Objective E-38 and Policy E-28-d address the need for Sanger Unified to plan for these high school and middle school campuses:

**Objective E-28:** Cooperate with and encourage all school districts within the metropolitan area to provide the educational facilities and programs necessary to meet the needs of the area's student population.

**E-28-d.** The acquisition of school sites and construction of school facilities that are equal to, or greater than, the state standards for school enrollment and school size by all school districts serving the metropolitan area is a high priority for the City of Fresno.

General Plan Policy E-28-e specifically addresses the proposed acquisition of this site:

**E-28-e.** Support measures to acquire planned school sites and construct school facilities, including the assessment of additional school fees on new development, consistent with applicable state and federal laws....

The City's General Plan includes many policies directed intended for optimal incorporation of schools into the urban environment in ways that are beneficial for students and neighborhoods. Objective E-29 of the 2025 Fresno General Plan directs the City to "Plan for location and design of schools to ensure their physical and functional compatibility with surrounding urban development, and the proposed acquisition of this existing building appears to fulfill that objective. The site proposed by Sanger Unified, after its site selection analysis process, appears to meet these criteria because it is very close to the high school site that City of Fresno staff recommended in 1992 during the Roosevelt Community Plan Update.

Policies E-29.a through E-29.f provide more specific guidance applicable to this proposed school site:

**E-29-a.** Schools should be located and designed to facilitate safe and convenient access to circulation systems including pedestrian and bicycle routes whenever possible; maintain compatibility with surrounding land uses; contribute to a positive neighborhood identity; and, support the overall community design objectives of the general plan, community plan or applicable specific plan.

- Work closely with representatives of public and private schools during the preparation and amendment of plans (particularly land use, circulation, and public facilities elements), and the processing of development proposals to ensure that plan policies are well-conceived and effectively implemented.
- Require school districts to provide necessary street improvements, pedestrian facilities, public facilities and public services at each new school site.



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- Continue to designate appropriate school sites on the general plan land use map (as well as applicable community and specific plans) compatible with the locational criteria of each school district.
- When school districts propose a new school site inconsistent with an adopted plan, or in zone districts where schools are not permitted, the city shall require a plan amendment and rezone application for the site. Pursuant to state law, districts shall also obtain the appropriate special permit.

**E-29-c.** Encourage school districts to request the designation of needed new school sites on the appropriate plan land use map, at the earliest time possible, in order to facilitate planning for compatible land uses and better ensure that future school sites can be accommodated...

**E-29-e.** Incorporate school district facility design and locational criteria within community and specific plans to the extent feasible and compatible with overall planning policies and objectives. The following facility size and service area characteristics are provided as ... generalized “rule of thumb” planning measures to evaluate the adequacy of general plan land use distribution and facility planning

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Attendance Radius</u>	<u>Minimum Site Size</u>
K - 6	1 mile	10 – 20 acres
7 - 8	2 miles	20 – 40 acres
9 – 12	2 – 3 miles	40 – 60 acres

**E-29-f.** The following considerations are presented as recommended criteria for school site location planning and may be supplemented or modified by community and specific plan policies.

. . .

- Locate middle and high school sites immediately adjacent to major streets....

The proposed dual campus complies with direction in Policy E-29-f that middle and high schools have major street frontage. As noted above in the second bullet item of Policy No. E-29.a, the General Plan intends that schools provide transportation facilities and other infrastructure to meet the needs of the schools and the neighborhoods in which they are located. The size and location of this site would involve making improvements on three major street frontages (Jensen Avenue, with an expressway designation that does not allow for direct access; Fowler Avenue, an arterial which requires controlled access; and Church Avenue, a collector).

Standard policies for siting transit facilities on major streets would require locating City bus turnouts or stops on the site's Jensen Avenue frontage east of Armstrong Avenue, on its Fowler Avenue frontage north of Jensen Avenue, and on Church Avenue east of Fowler Avenue. Its Jensen Avenue frontage

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would need to incorporate improvements for the City's planned Master Trail that provides for bicycle and pedestrian travel.

As noted previously, water supply is problematic for southeast Fresno, and currently the utility network is not complete for this property. Water mains are only installed in Church Avenue and halfway down the site's Fowler Avenue frontage. However, information obtained from the Department of Public Utilities in preparation of this Report to the Planning Commission indicates that water main utility improvement plans have been approved for Sanger Unified to install a water line for its own proposed use extending south from the Church Avenue water main to a point approximately halfway down the site's Armstrong Avenue frontage (private property fronting Armstrong Avenue between Church Avenue and the school site would not be permitted to use this private water main absent an agreement with the City and SUSD).

The proposed high school and middle school campus is located in the Fowler Trunk Sewer Service area and there is trunk sewer and treatment capacity in the wastewater treatment and reclamation system for it. However, again owing to its location on the fringe of the urbanized city, the only existing sewer main along the site's frontages is a line extending south from the Fowler/Church intersection to a point halfway down the site's Fowler Avenue frontage. The Department of Public Utilities reports that sewer main utility improvement plans have been approved for SUSD to install a sewer main along the site's entire Church Avenue frontage and southward in Armstrong Avenue to a point approximately three-quarters of the distance between Church and Jensen Avenues.

The City's Department of Public Utilities has determined that the District is not currently being required to submit improvement plans for utility lines in Jensen Avenue, or plans for permanent water and sewer utilities for the southerly segments of its frontages on Fowler or Armstrong Avenues. The ultimate configuration of those utility line segments is under study as part of the Southeast Growth Area planning effort. This determination would be consistent with 2025 Fresno General Plan policy E-28-c:

**E-28-c.** The implementation of strategies by school districts to provide and efficiently utilize facilities is to be considered an important factor by the City of Fresno when contributing its resources....

The best means for providing an urban level of service to the entire campus, for maintaining consistent street standards for the entire site, and for ensuring that emergency responders will have clear jurisdiction, is for the entire site to be annexed to the City of Fresno. This would involve annexation of the southerly six parcels (APNs 316-022-29S, 316-022-31, 316-022-32, 316-022-33, 316-022-34, and 316-022-35).

The northwesterly third of the proposed school site (comprised of APNs 316-022-27S, 316-022-28S, and 316-022-30S) has already been rezoned from the Fresno County AL 20 (*Limited Twenty-Acre Agricultural*) zone district to the City of Fresno R-1/UGM/ANX (*Single-Family Residential District, Urban Growth Management Area, Annexed Rural Residential Transitional Overlay*) zone district via City of Fresno Rezone No. R-08-05 and the Church-Fowler No. 2 Reorganization approved by LAFCO. Through the annexation process for the southerly two-thirds of the proposed school site, a city zone district compatible with the intensive/urban character of the proposed campus would be applied. The R-1 zone district does permit schools by conditional use permit (although the District Board may vote to suspend this local zoning requirement for the site).

Depicting school sites on plan maps is important for emergency response planning and for preparing environmental assessments. CEQA guidelines direct that school site locations be identified in the

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vicinity of projects. Students are considered "sensitive receptors" for air pollutants, and Public Resources Code Section 21151.4 has specific requirements for assessing proposed emitters of hazardous air pollutants within one-quarter mile of schools. Having the Southwest Middle School property depicted on general plan update maps as Public Facility – High School & Middle School would properly denote the site for future environmental reviews, to ensure ongoing health and safety for people at the school campus.

The detailed site surveys and record searches being conducted for the school's environmental assessment should reveal any private water or wastewater facilities that may still exist or that may not have been properly abandoned in the past. When permits are obtained for these well destruction and septic system abandonments, City inspectors can ensure that the work is properly done.

### Other issues

Issues which did not result in formal recommendations, but which Sanger Unified may wish to address in its environmental studies for site development, include the following:

- ❖ The LAFCO Certificate of Completion for annexation of the northerly portion of this site references [Vesting] Tentative Tract Map No. 5552. This vesting tentative tract map was approved by the City in June of 2006, and the City approved a two-year extension of the map in June of 2008. State legislation has granted a further extension, and it appears that the tentative tract map has not expired as of the date of this report to the City of Fresno Planning Commission.
- ❖ As depicted in the attached map of planned land uses in the area, there is a small (approximately 1-acre) property planned for Public Facility just to the east of the site's northeastern corner. This parcel (APN 316-022-26U) is owned by Pacific Gas & Electric Company (PG&E). SUSD may need to consult with PG&E as to the intended use of this parcel and whether any power transmission lines will be routed to it and/or through the proposed school site.
- ❖ Schools are considered to be a noise-sensitive land use. The Master Environmental Impact Report (MEIR) prepared for the 2025 Fresno General Plan included an analysis of projected noise levels from traffic associated with major streets. Figure VK-3 of the MEIR indicates that an acoustical analysis should be prepared for this school site, to assess and mitigate traffic noise from Jensen, Fowler, Church, and Armstrong Avenues. Figure VK-4 of the MEIR indicates that traffic noise may not be fully mitigable within 101 to 300 feet of the centerline of East Jensen Avenue, a factor which would be important for planning the layout of the school facilities to avoid the most noise-impacted portions of the site.

When the draft environmental impact report is released for the City's General Plan update, the issue of traffic noise will be re-analyzed and the assessment and mitigation formula is expected to change due to the proposed Southeast Area Growth Plan, among other factors.
- ❖ Land on the north side of this proposed school site—on the north side of East Church Avenue—also received ANX (*Annexed Rural Residential Transitional Overlay*) zoning, which provides for retention of some agricultural activities on the land. The southerly two-thirds of the proposed school site and adjacent properties which have not been annexed pursuant to urban development applications retain their County agricultural zoning and appear to be under active cultivation. The Right to Farm covenant required by LAFCO would shield ongoing farming activities from many nuisance complaints, but in order to



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protect the students and schoolgrounds some kind of interface treatment may be necessary. The Roosevelt Community Plan has policies for treating the urban/agricultural interface to avoid health and safety impacts and undesirable land use conflicts. In addition, the Cal-EPA Department of Toxic Substance Control school site liaison in Sacramento is prepared to consult with Sanger Unified and their consultants on Phase I and Phase II site evaluations for any hazardous agrichemical residuals which remain on the site from its previous use as cultivated farmland.

- ❖ The proposed school site lies entirely within Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District (FMFCD) Drainage Area BL, with Basin BL abutting the east side of the proposed high school and middle school campus. Table 7 of the 2025 Fresno General Plan indicates that FMFCD has a planned conjunctive recreational open space use for Basin BL. Sanger Unified may be able to partner with FMFCD for shared recreational facilities on this ponding basin.

## CONCLUSION / RECOMMENDATION

Based upon review and analysis of this request, staff recommends that the Planning Commission make the following determination:

RECOMMEND SUPPORT for the Sanger Unified School District (SUSD) acquisition and development of 116 acres for a high school and middle school campus, provided that:

- a. SUSD works with the City of Fresno on the General Plan Update (which will also update the Roosevelt Community Plan) to have the planned land uses of this acreage redesignated entirely to Public Facility – High School & Middle School for the school site; and
- b. SUSD satisfies the “Right-To-Farm” covenant required by the Fresno County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) for the “Church-Fowler No. 2 Reorganization” (the annexation) of the northerly three parcels of the proposed school site, and requests annexation of the entire school site to the City of Fresno to facilitate public service delivery; and
- c. SUSD consults with the City of Fresno on any necessary water supply infrastructure and provides for utility deemed necessary by the Department of Public Utilities pursuant to the Urban Growth Management program for fringe area development and street/pedestrian improvements as required by City Public Works Standards; and
- d. SUSD obtains building permits to properly cap off all water and sewer utility connections for properties being purchased and demolished, and to properly abandon any remnant individual water wells and on-site wastewater disposal systems which may remain or which may not have been properly abandoned by past owners.

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- Attachments:
- June 13, 2011 letter from Sanger Unified School District requesting consultation with the City on the SUSD proposed High school & Middle School site
  - Vicinity map showing parcelization and annexation status of the proposed SUSD High school & Middle School site and surrounding property
  - 2009 Aerial Photo of the proposed SUSD High school & Middle School site (from the SUSD Site Selection Study)
  - Map of current planned land uses in the vicinity of SUSD's proposed High school & Middle School site
  - May 7, 2010 LAFCO Certificate of Completion for the "Church-Fowler No. 2 Reorganization" annexation
  - SUSD Site Selection Study (May, 2011), prepared by Paoli & Odell, Inc. and Blair, Church & Flynn



# SANGER UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

1905 SEVENTH STREET • SANGER, CA 93657  
(559) 524-6521 / 237-3171 FAX 875-0311

MARCUS P. JOHNSON, SUPERINTENDENT

June 13, 2011

Mr. Mark Scott  
City Manager  
City of Fresno  
2600 Fresno Street  
Fresno, CA 93721

Subject: Sanger Unified School District Proposed High School/Middle School Site:  
East side of S. Fowler Avenue between E. Church and E Jensen Avenues

Dear Mr. Scott:

We very much appreciated meeting with you and your staff on June 1, 2011, regarding Sanger Unified School District's selection of a preferred site for a new high school and middle school in southeast Fresno. This is a very important project for our District as it will allow us to better serve our high school and middle school students residing in southeast Fresno, as well as the substantial growth in student population anticipated for the area.

This is also a very important project for the City of Fresno, as it will provide for an estimated \$100 million investment in educational facilities, better educational opportunities for City residents, increased opportunities for community and recreational activities, and hundreds of construction and permanent jobs. This project, in concert with the almost-completed Sequoia Elementary School will be a catalyst and an integral focal point for a substantial residential project contemplated for the area.

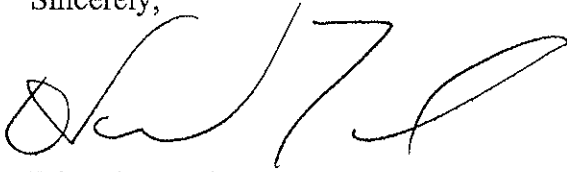
As the City of Fresno continues its work on the General Plan update, we look forward to working closely with you and your staff, and with developers and property owners in the area, to ensure that the area is appropriately planned to provide for the best educational and residential environment possible. Please don't hesitate to include or involve us in any meetings or activities related to the planning of any areas within our District.

In the spirit of early cooperation, we are requesting by separate letter a Planning Commission consultation in accordance with Public Resources Code Section 21151.2 and Government Code Section 65402(c). Although the proposed school site is not currently within the City limits, we recognize that the City of Fresno has the primary responsibility for planning within its Sphere of Influence, thereby making such consultation appropriate.

----- "A Tradition of Excellence" -----  
Trustees: Peter R. Filippi Jim Gonzalez James D. Karle Kenneth R. Marcantonio  
Jesse Vasquez Walter Villarreal Tammy Wolfe

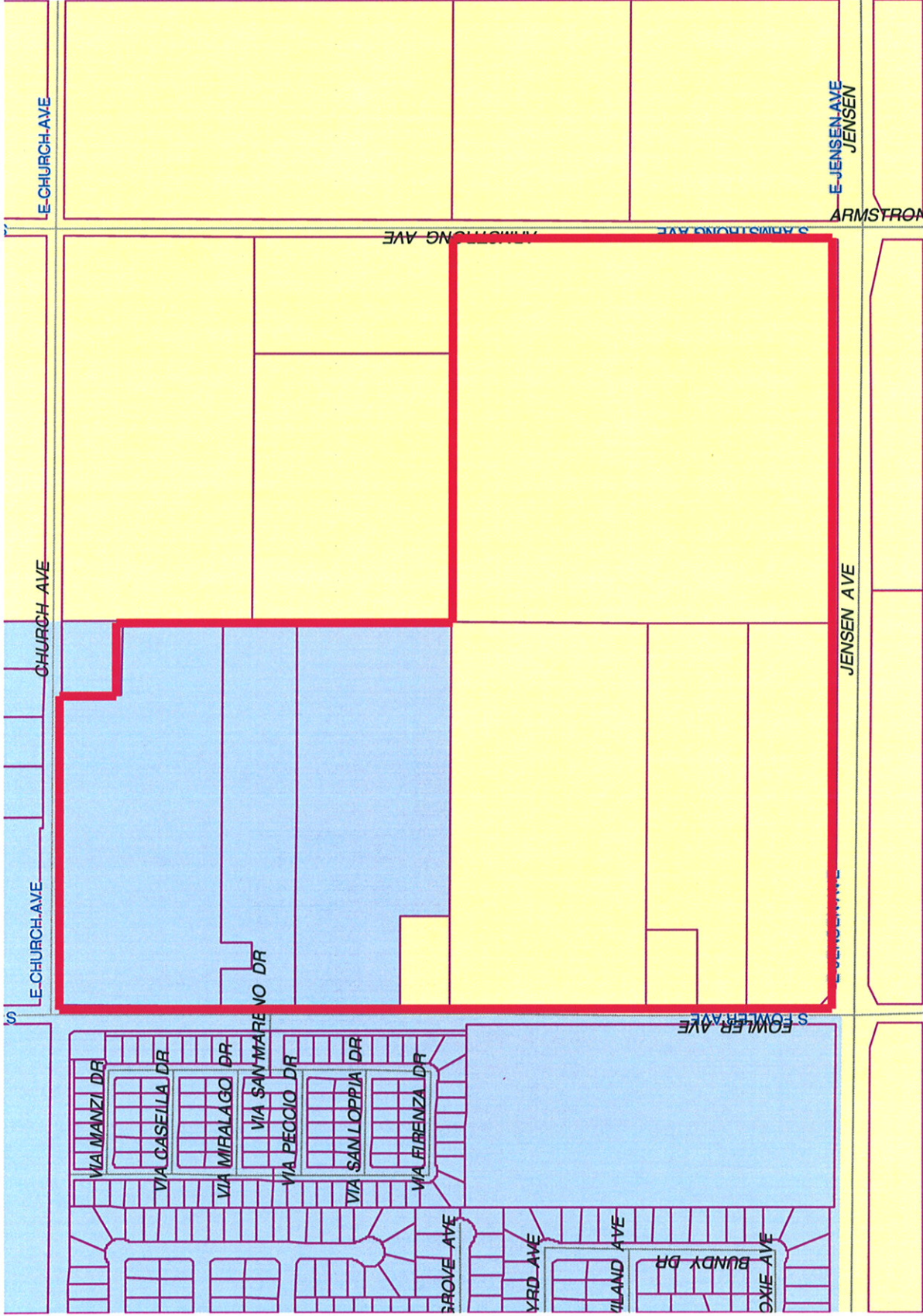
In closing, we look forward to working closely with the City of Fresno, not only with this site, but in future planning efforts for any areas in which we have joint interests. This can only enhance our mutual goal of enhancing the educational, social and economic future of both the residents of Sanger Unified School District and the City of Fresno.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Eduardo Martinez', with a stylized, flowing script.

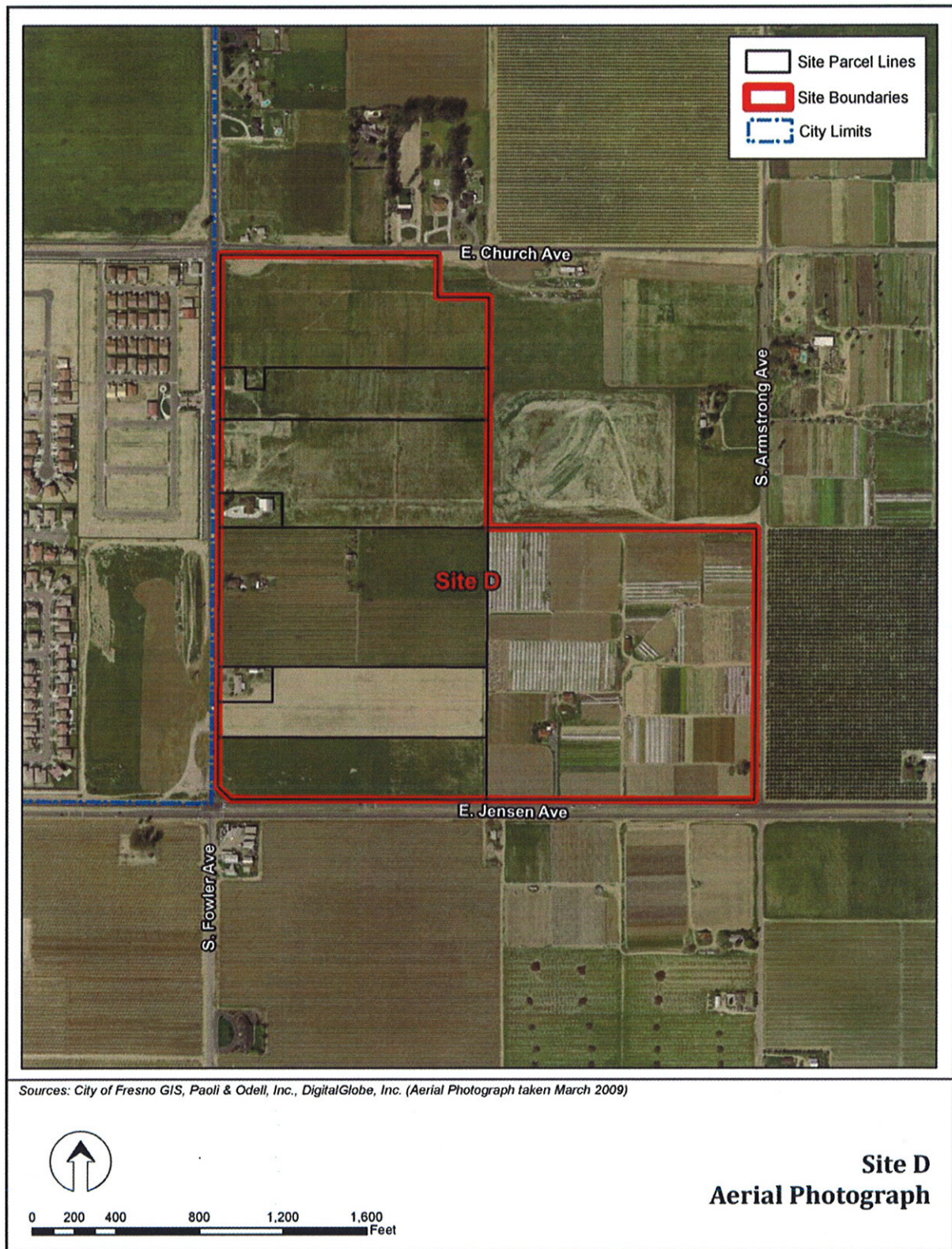
Eduardo Martinez  
Associate Superintendent

cc: John Dugan, AICP, Director, Development & Resource Management Department  
Keith Bergthold, Assistant Director, Development & Resource Management Dept.  
Kevin Fabino, Planning Manager, Development & Resource Management Dept.  
Mike Sanchez, Planning Manager, Development & Resource Management Dept.  
Richard Sepulveda, Chief Operations Officer, Sanger Unified School District  
Scott Odell, AICP, Paoli & Odell, Inc.



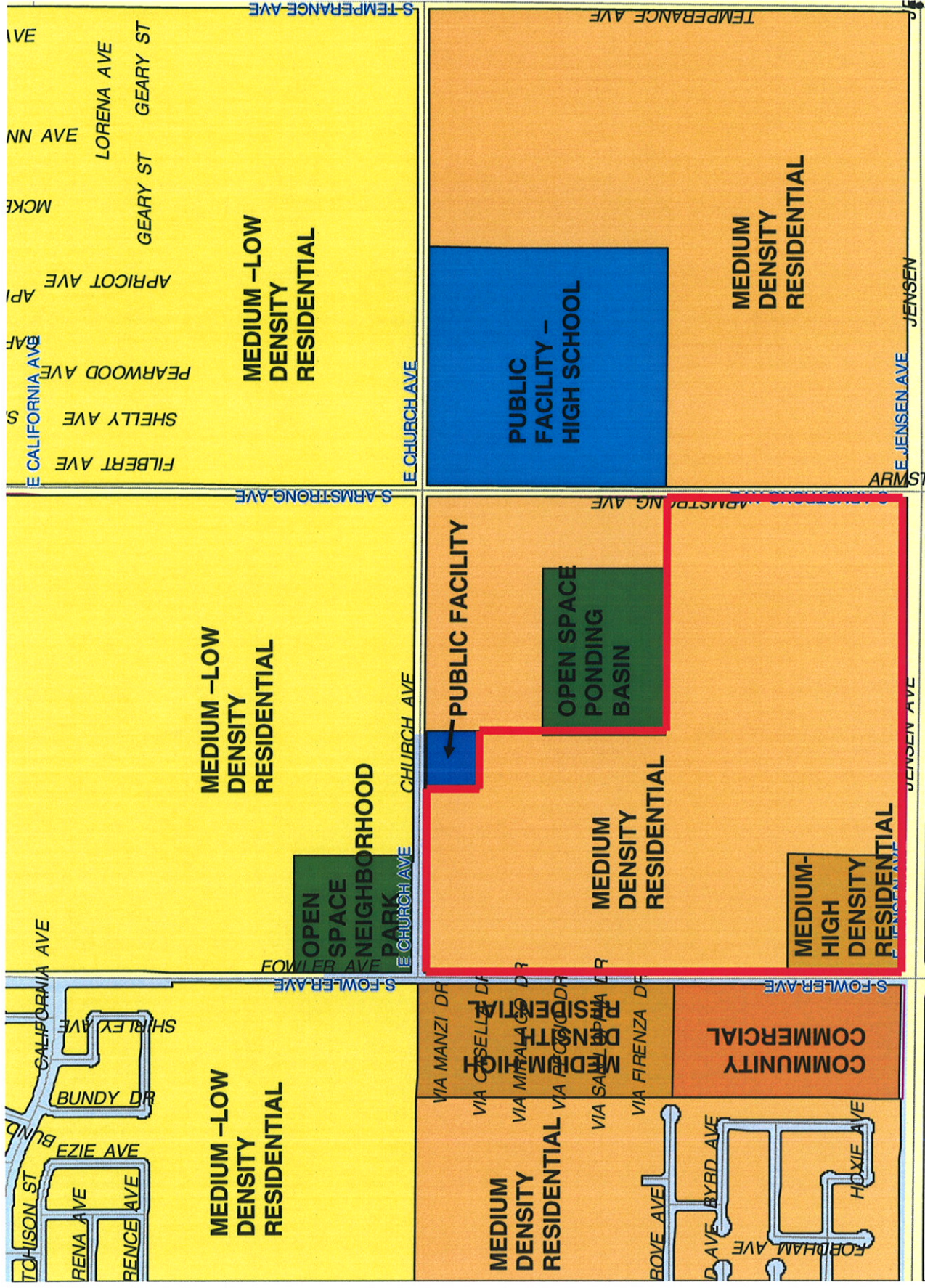
**Vicinity map showing parcelization and annexation status of the  
proposed site for the Sanger Unified High School & Middle School campus  
(light blue properties are already annexed to the City of Fresno)**





**2009 aerial photo of the  
proposed site for the Sanger Unified High School & Middle School campus**





Planned land uses in the vicinity of the proposed site for  
Sanger Unified High School-Middle School campus

**CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION  
FRESNO COUNTY LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION**

The Fresno Local Agency Formation Commission was the Conducting Authority.

The names of the agencies whose territory is changed and the type of change for each are:

Annexation to the City of Fresno and detachment from the Fresno County Fire Protection District and the Kings River Conservation District.

The County in which the entire boundary change occurred is Fresno County.

The short title of the reorganization proceeding is "Church-Fowler No. 2 Reorganization" LAFCo File No. RO-07-4.

The affected territory is uninhabited.

The change of organization was ordered without an election, and Resolution No. RO-07-4A ordering the change of organization was adopted by the Fresno Local Agency Formation Commission on July 8, 2009.

A legal description of the territory affected by the reorganization is set forth in the attached Exhibit "A".

The conditions of approval of the reorganization were as follows and have been complied with:

1. Ownership of land permitting, the reorganization shall include the full existing right-of-way width of adjacent streets.
2. The City of Fresno shall submit to the Executive Officer verification that a Right-to-Farm Covenant is required and will be made a part of the City's development agreement, and that this legal covenant will be recorded for that portion of the affected territory encompassing Tentative Tract No. 5552.

I, Jeff Witte, Executive Officer of the Fresno County Local Agency Formation Commission, hereby certify that the attached legal description, map, and terms and conditions of the change of organization do comply with the Commission's resolution of approval.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
JEFF WITTE, EXECUTIVE OFFICER  
FRESNO LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION

Dated: May 7, 2010





## Fresno Local Agency Formation Commission

### NOTICE OF COMPLETION OF BOUNDARY CHANGE

Date: May 7, 2010  
To: Clerk, City of Fresno  
From: Jeff Witte, Executive Officer *JW*  
Subject: "Church-Fowler No. 2 Reorganization"  
LAFCo File No. RO-07-4

Please be advised that all filings for the above approved annexation have been made, as required by California Government Code Section 57200 et seq. The change of organization is now complete and effective.

A certified copy of the Certificate of Completion is enclosed along with the map and legal description indicating the recording numbers affixed by the County Recorder. A Statement of Boundary Change was sent to the County Assessor, County Auditor, and State Board of Equalization.

A map showing the change of boundaries was also sent to the agencies listed on the attached letter of transmittal.

JW:cf

Attachments

# New High School and Middle School Site Selection Study

*Prepared for*



*Prepared by*

**Paoli & Odell, Inc.**  
School Facility, Environmental and City Planners

**Blair,  
Church  
& Flynn**  
CONSULTING ENGINEERS

**May 2011**

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Site A Aerial Photograph

Site B Aerial Photograph

Site C Aerial Photograph

Site D Aerial Photograph



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## Executive Summary

This study identifies and evaluates potential sites for a new Sanger Unified School District (District or SUSD) high school and middle school campus in the southeast Fresno area of the District. The southeast Fresno area consists of the portion of SUSD located within the City of Fresno Sphere of Influence and includes a portion of the Southeast Growth Area (SEGA) Specific Plan Area (see Figure 1). The possibility also exists for a combined high school/middle school campus. The new schools will allow the District to provide existing and future SUSD students living in the southeast Fresno area to attend a local school as opposed to being bussed approximately six miles east to Sanger to attend Sanger High School and Washington Academic Middle School. In addition, the new schools will allow the District to relieve existing overcrowding at these schools and provide room for enrollment growth from new development in southeast Fresno and Sanger.

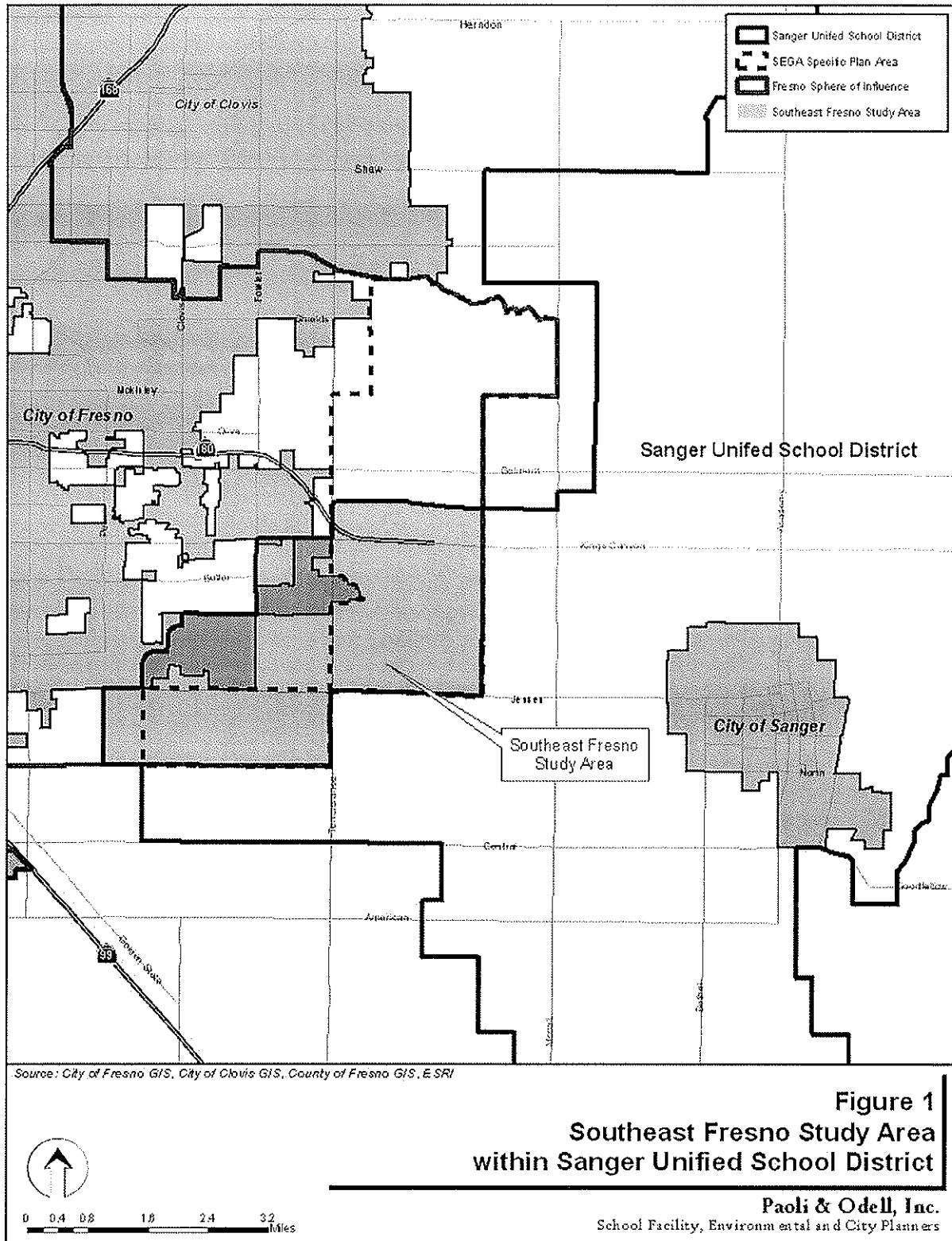
The identification and evaluation of potential school sites is based upon site selection standards established by the District and the California Department of Education. Student and staff safety is the paramount issue addressed in the standards. The school sites must be approved by the California Department of Education before the District can receive state assistance to acquire and develop the site.

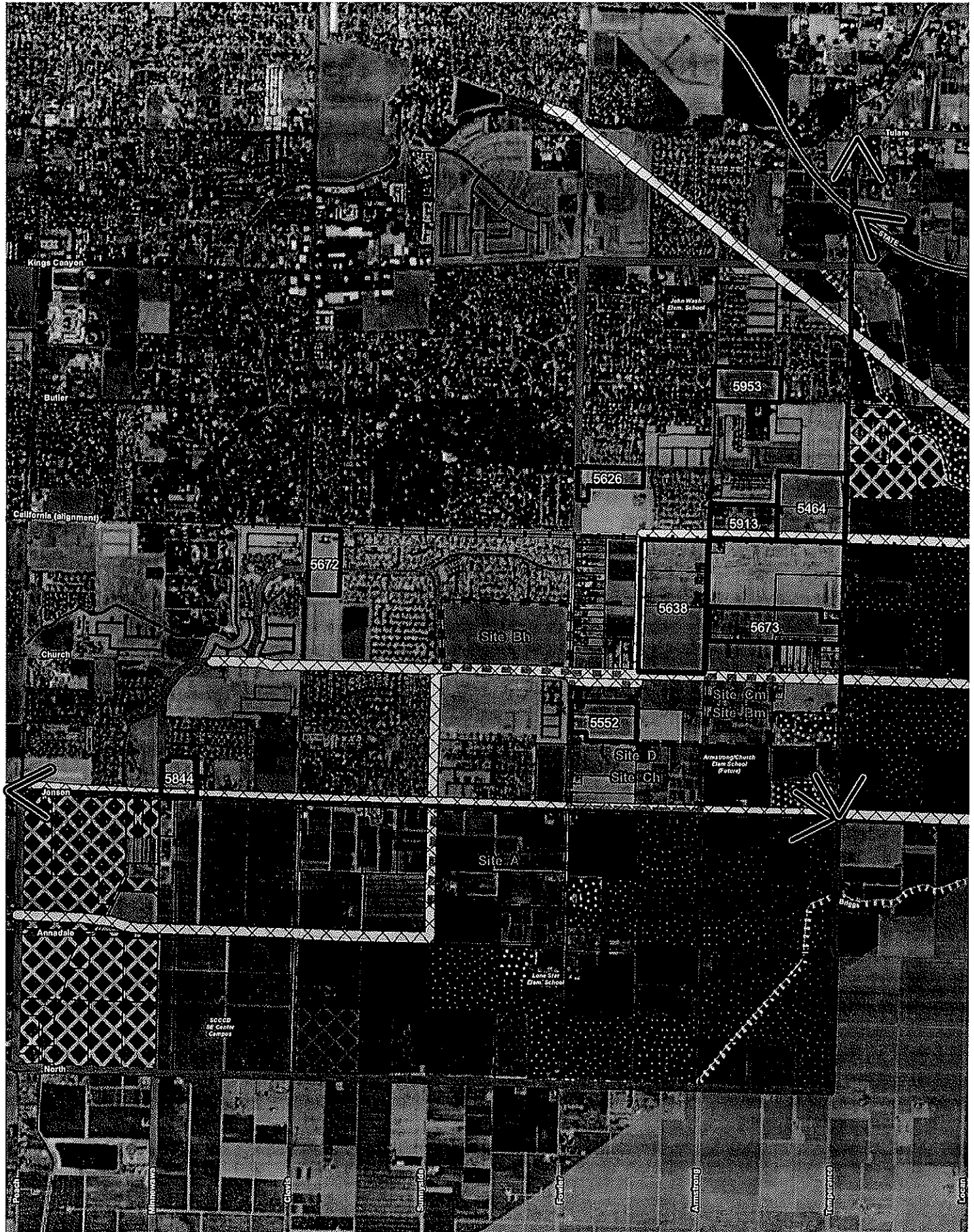
A Site Selection Constraints Map (Figure 2) was prepared in order to identify potential sites within the study area suitable for a high school and middle school. The identification of potential school sites was constrained in large part by the extent to which the areas east of Temperance Avenue and south of Jensen Avenue contain parcels under Williamson Act contract. In addition, much of this area is planned for industrial and commercial uses, which could potentially conflict with a high school and middle school. Four alternative sites were identified that had the potential to comply with the District and California Department of Education site selection standards.

Among the four sites, Site D was identified as warranting primary consideration as the preferred school site. Site D, consisting of 116 acres, is located on east side of Fowler Avenue between Church and Jensen Avenues. The major advantages of Site D are that it is large enough to accommodate both the high school and middle school on one contiguous site; it is adjacent to the Fresno City limits and urban services; and it is adjacent to an FMFCD ponding basin that is planned for recreational uses.

Site D is made up of nine parcels and five owners and it contains six single family residences. This is disadvantageous in terms of requiring the assembly of property and the demolition of existing residences.

Further research must be conducted to determine if Site D (or another site) fully complies with District and California Department of Education school site selection standards. This research should be undertaken after the District has considered and identified a preferred site (or sites).





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## Introduction

The Sanger Unified School District commissioned this study to assist the District with the identification of a potential site (or sites) for a high school and middle school in the southeast Fresno area of the District. The decision to locate these facilities in the southeast Fresno area is the result of a study prepared by the District in 2009. The *SUSD Second High School General Location Study* evaluated both the north Sanger area and southeast Fresno area and determined the latter area to be the most appropriate for the District's next high school and middle school. The study cited several factors in recommending the southeast Fresno area. The chief factors were: 1) the greater population growth potential in southeast Fresno as compared to Sanger; and 2) the lack of a District high school in the District's southeast Fresno area.

The new high school and middle school have a planned enrollment of 2,500 and 1,500 students, respectively. The District may also construct a football stadium and agricultural education facility at the high school. If a separate high school and middle school site configuration is selected, the middle school will likely include a track/football and soccer field facility.

The information presented in this study includes:

- Discussion of the need for the new high school and middle school;
- The site selection standards used to evaluate potential sites for the new high school and middle school;
- An evaluation of the potential sites based upon the site selection standards; and
- The conclusions and recommendations of the study.

## Need for New High School and Middle School

A new high school and middle school are needed in order to accommodate existing SUSD students in southeast Fresno and student population growth that will continue to occur as a result of planned development in the Sanger Unified portion of the City of Fresno Sphere of Influence. Additional development potential exists within the City of Fresno's existing service area north of Jensen and west of Temperance Avenue (approximately 3,000 residential units). However, the greatest potential for future growth is within City of Fresno's Southeast Growth Area (SEGA) Specific Plan Area, which is currently undergoing environmental review. The Notice of Preparation and Initial Study prepared for the SEGA Specific Plan indicates that upon build-out, the SEGA Specific Plan would result in the development of approximately 45,000 residential units (single- and multi-family) with an ultimate resident population of approximately 107,000. Of these amounts, it is estimated that over 30,000 residential units will be developed and 73,000 residents will reside within the Sanger Unified portion of SEGA. The number of additional high school students resulting from this development is estimated to be between 2,556 and 3,195. An equally significant number of new middle school students would also be generated as a result of development within SEGA.

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Existing high school and middle school students living in the study area attend Sanger High School and Washington Academic Middle School in Sanger. Currently, both schools are over capacity. A new high school and middle school in the southeast Fresno area would provide capacity for the students currently residing in the area, as well as capacity for substantial future growth. The new schools in southeast Fresno would also free up capacity in Sanger for City of Sanger growth.

Without a new Sanger Unified high school and middle school in southeast Fresno an increasing number of Sanger Unified students in the southeast Fresno area would likely attend nearby Fresno or Clovis schools.

## **Site Selection Standards**

The identification and evaluation of potential high school and middle school sites in this study is based upon school site selection standards established by the Sanger Unified School District and the California Department of Education. The standards are summarized below and are further described under the evaluation of the potential sites.

- The new high school and middle school site(s) must be within the portion of the District located within the Fresno Sphere of Influence, as shown in Figure 1.
- The net usable acres and enrollment for the new high school and middle school site(s) should be consistent with the California Department of Education standards presented in Tables 1-6 of the 2000 Edition, "School Site Analysis and Development."
- The new high school and middle school site(s) should provide a safe, healthy environment for students and staff. The site should not conflict with California Department of Education standards related to: proximity to major power lines, high pressure pipelines, railroad tracks, major highways, major noise sources, major air pollution sources, airports, above-ground storage tanks, flooding, and existing or planned incompatible land uses and zoning.
- The new high school and middle school site(s) should have suitable physical characteristics for a high school and middle school. Factors to be considered include site configuration, existing on-site and surrounding development, soils, topography, and other physical conditions.
- The new high school and middle school site(s) should be well located in relation to existing and planned residential development, major street access, safe pedestrian access, and utilities and services (e.g. sewer, water, storm drainage, law enforcement, fire protection).
- The new high school and middle school site(s) should have minimal existing development, few property owners, and should not disrupt existing neighborhoods.

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## Identification of Potential High School and Middle School Sites

### Study Area

The study area encompasses an 11.5-square-mile area bounded by the SUSD boundary on the west; North and Jensen Avenues on the south; Highland Avenue on the east; and Tulare Avenue on the north (see Figure 1). The types of land uses found within the study area include urban residential and commercial uses within the existing City of Fresno service area (north of Jensen Avenue and west of Temperance Avenue) and agricultural and rural residential development within the SEGA portion of the study area. A portion of State Route 180 is currently under construction in the northern portion of the study area between Temperance and Highland Avenues.

### Potential High School and Middle School Sites

In order to identify potential sites suitable for a high school and middle school within the study area, a Site Selection Constraints Map (Figure 2) was prepared. The Site Selection Constraints Map shows the locations of land use and hazards constraints within the study area. These constraints include land containing incompatible existing and future land uses (primarily industrial and commercial uses), expressways and major arterial roadways, canals and waterways, flood hazard areas, electrical transmission lines, high pressure pipelines, lands under Williamson Act contract, and potentially hazardous land uses. The identification of potential school sites was constrained in large part by the extent to which the areas east of Temperance Avenue and south of Jensen Avenue (1) contain parcels under Williamson Act contract; (2) are planned for industrial and commercial uses which could potentially conflict with a high school and middle school; and (3) may not have urban services available for a ten to twenty year period (in the case of the area east of Temperance Avenue).

Four alternative sites were identified that had the potential to comply with the District and California Department of Education site selection standards. The locations of the sites are shown on Figure 3 and the characteristics of the sites are summarized in Table 1. (Please see Appendix A for an aerial photograph of each site.)

Site A consists of 108.4 acres located on the southwest corner of Jensen and Fowler Avenues. Site A has three parcels, three owners and two single family residences.

Sites B and C each consist of two non-contiguous areas; one portion for the high school and a separate portion for the middle school.<sup>1</sup> The total area of Site B is 117.3 acres, with 77.9 acres for the high school and 39.4 acres for the middle school. The high school portion of Site B is located at the northwest corner of Church and Fowler Avenues and the middle school portion is located at the southeast corner of Church and Armstrong Avenues. Site B has two parcels and two owners.

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<sup>1</sup> For simplicity, throughout the remainder of this document, the high school portion of Sites B and C will be referred to as Site B<sub>HS</sub> and Site C<sub>HS</sub> (subscript HS denotes high school). Similarly, the middle school portions will be referred to as Site B<sub>MS</sub> and Site C<sub>MS</sub>.



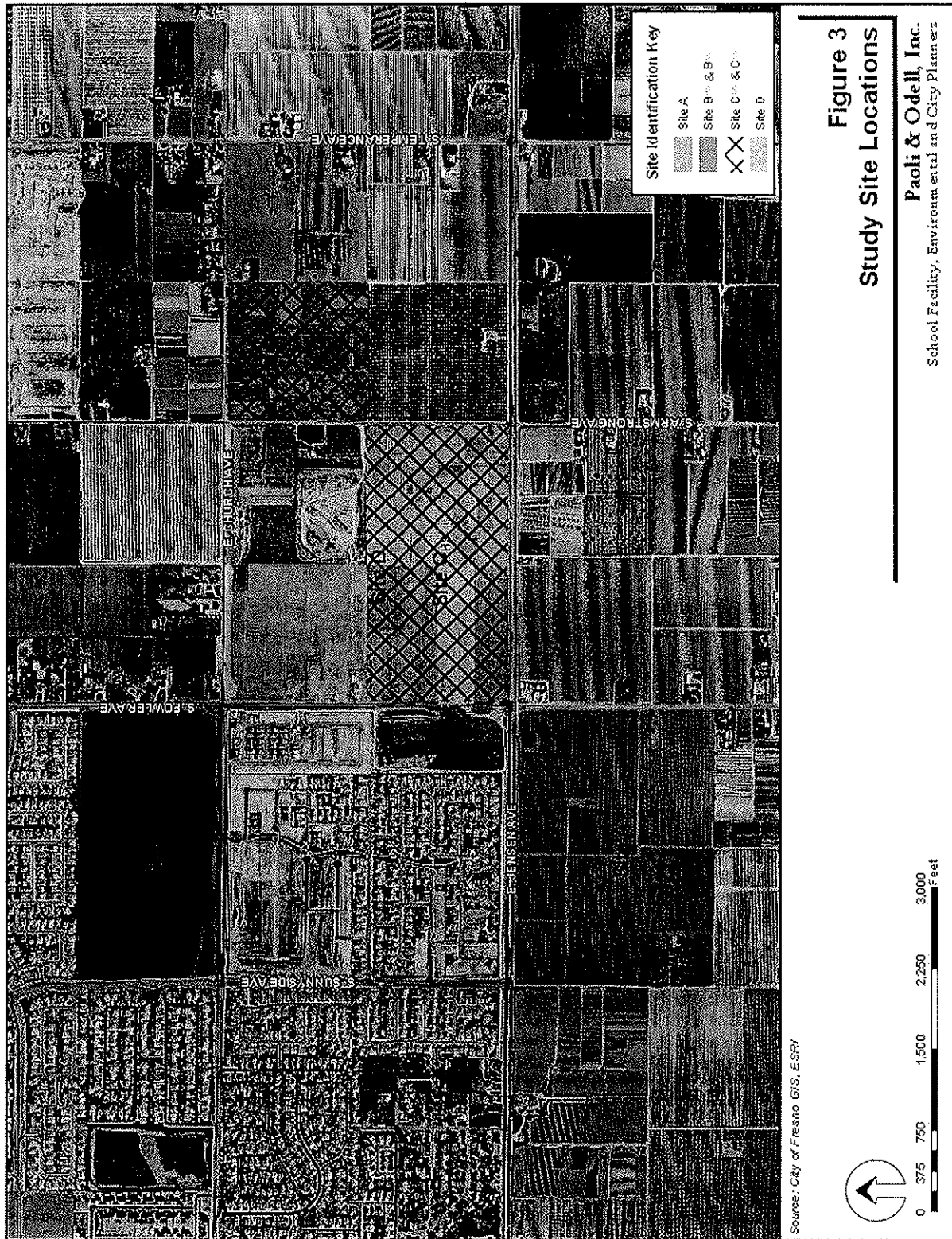


Table 1 General Characteristics of Potential School Sites								
Site	General Location	Jurisdiction	Planned Land Use Designation <sup>1</sup>	Zoning <sup>2</sup>	Size (Gross Acres)	No. of Parcels	No. of Owners	Existing Land Uses
A	Southwest corner of Jensen and Fowler Avenues	County of Fresno (City of Fresno SOI)	Neighborhood Center, Mixed Residential, and Neighborhood Residential	AE-20	108.4	3	3	2 single family residences and agricultural and/or vacant land.
B	B <sub>HS</sub> Northwest corner of Church and Fowler Avenues	City of Fresno	Medium Low Density Residential	R-1	77.9	1	1	Vacant land
	B <sub>MS</sub> Southeast corner of Church and Armstrong Avenues	County of Fresno (City of Fresno SOI)	Public Facilities (High School)	AL-20	39.4	1	1	1 single family residence and agricultural land.
C	Total				117.3	2	2	
	C <sub>HS</sub> Northeast corner of Jensen and Fowler Avenues	County of Fresno (City of Fresno SOI)	Medium and Medium High Density Residential	AL-20	78.3	5	2	3 single family residences and agricultural and/or vacant land.
	C <sub>MS</sub> Southeast corner of Church and Armstrong Avenues	County of Fresno (City of Fresno SOI)	Public Facilities (High School)	AL-20	39.4	1	1	1 single family residence and agricultural land.
D	Total				117.7	6	3	
	D East side of Fowler Avenue between Church and Jensen	County of Fresno (City of Fresno SOI)	Medium and Medium High Density Residential	AL-20	116.0	9	5	6 single family residences and agricultural and/or vacant land.
1 – Planned Land Use Designations listed are from the <i>City of Fresno 2025 General Plan</i> and, where applicable, the <i>Draft SEGA Specific Plan</i> 2 – Zoning Definitions: AE-20: Exclusive Agricultural (20-acre minimum parcel size) AL-20: Agricultural Limited (20-acre minimum parcel size) R-1: Single Family Residential District								

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Site C is 117.7 acres, with 78.3 acres for the high school and 39.4 acres for the middle school. The high school portion of Site C is located at the northeast corner of Jensen and Fowler Avenues and the middle school portion is located at the southeast corner of Church and Armstrong Avenues. Site C has six parcels, four owners and four single family residences.

Site D, comprising 116.0 acres, is located on the east side of Fowler Avenue between Church and Jensen Avenues. Site D has nine parcels, seven owners and six single family residences.

## **Evaluation of Potential High School and Middle School Sites**

### **Introduction**

Sites A through D are evaluated and compared in this section based on the site selection criteria established by the District and the California Department of Education. This section also indicates if further research is required to determine if a site is compatible with a site selection standard. Because of the costs and time involved and the need for on-site access, these studies are normally performed after the number of potential sites has been reduced to one or two.

### **Site Evaluation and Comparison**

#### ***Site Size***

*Standard:* The net usable acreage and enrollment for a new school site shall be consistent with the numbers of acres and enrollment established in the 2000 edition of "School Site Analysis and Development" published by the California Department of Education, unless sufficient land is not available or other circumstances exist that would preclude complying with the site size standard.

The District prefers that both the high school and middle school be located on one site as an educational complex. There are both financial and educational benefits to building and operating the facilities on a joint site. The financial benefits include reduced cost of constructing and extending infrastructure improvements to one site rather than two different locations, equipment acquisition savings and lower operational and maintenance costs. The educational advantages include improved cross age and peer tutoring opportunities, enhanced co-curricular activities, a better transition from middle to high school, the availability of accelerated programs and increased parental involvement.

*Evaluation:* Based upon California Department of Education standards, the new high school site should have approximately 65 net usable acres to accommodate the optimum high school enrollment of 2,500 students, including a football stadium and agricultural education facility. The new middle school site should have approximately 28 net usable acres to accommodate the optimum middle school enrollment of 1,500 students, including acreage to accommodate a track and football/soccer field facility.

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Each site surpasses the minimum site size requirement established by the 2000 edition of “School Site Analysis and Development” published by the California Department of Education. Even with roadway and other land dedications that may be required, each site meets the minimum site size standard. No further evaluation of this topic is required.

### ***Site Shape***

*Standard:* The shape of the site should have a proportionate length to width ratio to accommodate the building layout, parking and playfields that can be safely supervised and does not exceed the allowed passing time to classes for the District.

A proportionate length to width ratio is generally interpreted to mean the length of the site should not exceed two times the width of the site.

*Evaluation:* Sites A, B, and C are generally rectangular or square shaped and have proportionate length to width ratios. Site D is “L”-shaped and each leg of the “L” has a proportionate length to width ratio. Therefore, each of the sites meets the site shape standard and no further evaluation of this topic is required.

### ***Major Street Access***

*Standard 1:* The site shall be easily accessible from arterial roads and shall allow minimum peripheral visibility from the planned site access driveways in accordance with site distance standards established by the California Department of Transportation.

*Standard 2:* The site shall not be on major arterial streets with a heavy traffic pattern as determined by site-related traffic studies including those that require students crossing unless mitigation of traffic hazards and a plan for the safe arrival and departure of students appropriate to the grade level has been provided by the city in accordance with the “School Area Pedestrian Safety” manual published by the California Department of Transportation.

*Evaluation:* “Arterial roads or streets” as referenced in Standards 1 and 2 are interpreted for this study to include roadways classified as major streets in the *2025 Fresno General Plan*. A description of the streets is provided below:

- ***E. Jensen Avenue*** is an east-west expressway that extends along the northern boundary of Site A and along the southern boundary of Site C<sub>HS</sub> and Site D. Expressways are defined by the general plan as “four- to six-lane divided roadways primarily servicing through and cross town traffic, with no direct access to abutting property and at-grade intersections located at approximately half-mile intervals.”
- ***S. Fowler Avenue*** is a north-south arterial street that extends along the eastern boundary of Site A and Site B<sub>HS</sub> and the western boundary of Site C<sub>HS</sub> and Site D. The general plan defines arterial streets as “four- to six-lane divided roadways, with somewhat limited access to abutting properties, and with the primary purpose of moving traffic within and between community plan areas and to and from freeway and expressways.”

- **S. Armstrong Avenue** is a north-south collector street that extends along the eastern portion of Site C<sub>HS</sub> and Site D. It also extends along the western boundary of Site B<sub>MS</sub> and Site C<sub>MS</sub>. Collector streets are defined by the general plan as “two- to four-lane undivided roadways, with the primary function of connecting local streets and arterials and neighborhood traffic generators and providing access to abutting properties.”
- **S. Sunnyside Avenue** is a north-south collector street that extends along the western boundary of Site B<sub>HS</sub>. Sunnyside Avenue is also planned to continue south of Jensen Avenue along the western boundary of Site A.
- **E. Church Avenue** is an east-west collector street. It extends along the southern boundary of Site B<sub>HS</sub> and the northern boundary of Sites B<sub>MS</sub>, C<sub>MS</sub>, and D.

The potential for safe, efficient access to Sites A through D varies based upon the location and extent of frontage each site has on a major street and how the frontage relates to the existing and future traffic associated with the existing and planned development located nearby.

The sizes, shapes, and orientations of each of the sites would allow for the opportunity for designing safe, efficient vehicular access to the school because of the substantial frontage each of the sites have with adjacent streets. High school sites should have access to more than one public street. Table 2 shows the amount of street frontage each site has with adjacent street segments.

<b>Table 2</b> <b>Approximate Length of Street Frontage</b> <b>Available for Potential School Sites</b>					
	<b>Roadway Segment</b>				
<b>Site</b>	<i>E. Jensen (Expressway)</i> <sup>1</sup>	S. Fowler (Arterial)	S. Armstrong (Collector)	S. Sunnyside (Collector)	E. Church (Collector)
A	2,500	1,800	0	1,850 (planned)	0
B <sub>HS</sub>	0	1,330	0	1,330	2,490
B <sub>MS</sub>	0	0	1,300	0	1,290
C <sub>HS</sub>	2,520	1,330	1,330	0	0
C <sub>MS</sub>	0	0	1,300	0	1,290
D	2,520	2,620	1,305	0	1,030
Distances are approximate and were measured using ArcGIS 9.3 software. 1 = The 2025 Fresno General Plan classifies Jensen Avenue as an “Expressway”. Expressways have no direct access to abutting properties. The amount of frontage each site has along Jensen Avenue is listed in this table for informative purposes only.					

Site A has adequate public street frontage with approximately 1,800 feet of existing public street frontage available along S. Fowler Avenue and approximately 1,850 feet of planned street frontage along Sunnyside Avenue. However, depending on the timing of adjacent development, the District could be required to pay the entire cost of constructing the segment of Sunnyside Avenue adjacent to Site A.

Both portions of Site B have adequate public street frontage. Site B<sub>HS</sub> has approximately 5,150 feet of public street frontage along S. Fowler, S. Sunnyside, and E. Church

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Avenues. Site B<sub>MS</sub> has 2,590 feet available on S. Armstrong and E. Church Avenues. Site B<sub>HS</sub> could have potential conflicts with the existing residential subdivisions located west and south of the site. Site B<sub>MS</sub> has access to two collector roads. Developing access to the site would not conflict with any existing or planned land uses in the vicinity, although the location of the planned elementary school south of the site would have to be considered when designing access to the site.

Site C<sub>HS</sub> has approximately 1,330 feet of public street frontage available along S. Fowler Avenue and 1,330 feet along S. Armstrong Avenue. Access would need to be placed an adequate distance north of E. Jensen Avenue in order to avoid potential traffic queuing problems. Given the east-west orientation of Site C<sub>HS</sub>, it may be advisable to construct a new public street along the north side of the site to provide the most appropriate access to the site. The planned elementary school to the east along S. Armstrong Avenue could also result in access issues, which would be helped by a new street along the north site of Site C<sub>HS</sub>. The access characteristics for Site C<sub>MS</sub> are the same as for Site B<sub>MS</sub>. Please see the previous discussion for explanation.

Site D has 2,620 feet of street frontage available along S. Fowler Avenue; 1,305 feet along S. Armstrong; and 1,030 feet along E. Church Avenue. The orientation of the high school and middle school on this site would likely consist of the middle school being placed on the 39 acre parcel located along S. Armstrong Avenue and the high school being placed on the remaining portion of the site located along S. Fowler Avenue. This configuration would result in adequate access for both schools with a total of 3,650 feet of frontage for the high school and 1,305 feet for the middle school.

The potential for developing safe, efficient access may be most constrained with Site A since the bulk of existing and potential future students would be located north of E. Jensen Avenue, thereby requiring most students to cross E. Jensen Avenue to access the school. In addition, the site currently only has access to one street (S. Fowler Avenue) and a new street (S. Sunnyside Avenue) would have to be constructed for adequate access to be provided. The other sites have adequate access available and would not require as many students to cross an expressway to reach the sites.

A site-related traffic study would be performed for the preferred site as part of the California Environmental Quality Act process.

### ***Land Use, Planning, and Zoning***

*Standard 1:* Existing or proposed zoning of the surrounding properties shall be compatible with schools in that it would not pose a potential health or safety risk to students or staff in accordance with Education Code Section 17213 and Government Code Section 65402 and available studies of traffic surrounding the site.

*Standard 2:* The new school site should not disrupt existing neighborhoods.

*Evaluation:* The California Department of Education site selection standard cited above refers to zoning as a determinant of the compatibility of a high school and middle school with surrounding properties. For this study, the evaluation is broadened to encompass the existing surrounding development and the adopted public land use policy for the



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surrounding land as reflected in the *2025 Fresno General Plan* and the proposed *Southeast Growth Area Specific Plan (SEGA Plan)*.

Three of the four sites (B, C, and D) are within a portion of the Fresno Sphere of Influence that has been transitioning from agricultural and open space uses to urban, mostly residential development. The land near the sites either has been developed with urban uses – single family residential subdivisions – or is designated for urban development in the *2025 Fresno General Plan*. The zoning of this land reflects either the existing urban development or will be rezoned to reflect the corresponding general plan designations as development occurs. Site A is within SEGA, which is in the environmental review process. The proposed SEGA plan shows residential, community center, and industrial uses adjacent to Site A.

Residential development typically does not pose potential health or safety risks for school students or staff. Therefore, the existing and planned residential development near Sites A through D should be compatible with a high school and middle school from health and safety standpoints.

Commercial and industrial uses can pose health and safety risks for school students and staff. The main concerns associated with commercial uses are traffic and nuisance/supervision issues, such as loitering and littering. Industrial uses can pose health and safety risks for schools due to the nature of the industrial processes and materials used, which could involve the storage and use of hazardous materials and the emission of air pollutants. Both commercial and industrial uses can generate substantial truck traffic. Planned industrial uses are located east of S. Fowler Avenue across from Site A and south of E. Jensen Avenue, across from Sites C<sub>HS</sub> and D. Further research will be required to determine if this industrial development may present health or safety risks for the schools.

The extent to which existing neighborhoods may be disrupted by the development of a high school and middle school can be viewed from two perspectives: First, the extent to which the schools may require removal of existing residences and, second, the extent to which the design and operational characteristics of the schools may adversely effect the existing residential environment.

Development of a new high school on Site D would require the removal of six single family residences, whereas four would have to be removed from Site C; two from Site A; and one from Site B. Therefore, the greatest disruption involving removal of residences would occur with Site D.

Although schools are usually located within residential areas, it is not uncommon for existing residents to have concerns about the impacts of having a new school developed nearby. These concerns may include, but are not necessarily limited to aesthetics, air quality, noise, and traffic congestion. The greatest concern in this regard would be the potential environmental issues associated with a new high school football stadium. Site B<sub>HS</sub> could have the greatest impact due to the existing neighborhoods located north, west, and south of the site. The extent to which these issues may adversely affect nearby neighborhoods would be evaluated under the California Environmental Quality Act process.

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### *High Voltage Power Lines*

*Standard:* The property line of the school site shall be at least the following distance from the edge of respective power line easements: (1) 100 feet from the edge of an easement for a 50-133 kV line, (2) 150 feet from the edge of an easement for a 220-230 kV line, and (3) 350 feet from the edge of an easement for a 500-550 kV line.

*Evaluation:* The alignments of four PG&E high voltage power transmission lines traverse the study area. Three of the four lines are located in the vicinity of the study sites. Two 70kV high voltage power transmission lines extend across the study area; one along the north side of E. Jensen Avenue and the other along E. Church Avenue. A 115kV transmission line makes its way into the area from the north between S. Fowler and S. Armstrong Avenues, then turns west upon reaching E. Church Avenue, following this alignment until turning south at S. Sunnyside Avenue where it continues past E. Jensen Avenue for approximately ½ mile where it then turns west and continues beyond.

As the voltage rating for the transmission lines described above fall between 50 and 133kV, the required setback is 100 feet from the edge of the easement. Portions of each of the high voltage power transmission lines described above are located within 100 feet of study sites as measured from the power poles. The following estimates of the approximate distances between the power poles and the nearest potential school site boundaries are for general reference purposes only and must be verified by surveys:

- For Site A, the setback area extends approximately 60 feet into the western portion of the site. None of the setback area for the electrical transmission line located on E. Jensen Avenue extends into the northern portion of the site.
- For Site B<sub>HS</sub>, the setback area extends approximately 90 feet into the E. Church Avenue frontage of the site. For Site B<sub>MS</sub>, the setback area extends approximately 80 feet into the E. Church Avenue frontage of the site.
- The 70kV transmission line alignment located along E. Jensen Avenue is coterminous with the southern parcel line of Site C<sub>HS</sub>. As such, the setback area of this transmission line extends 100 feet into the E. Jensen Avenue frontage of the site. For Site C<sub>MS</sub>, the setback area extends approximately 80 feet into the E. Church Avenue frontage of the site.
- Site D borders three high voltage transmission lines; two lines along its frontage with E. Church Avenue to the north and one line along its frontage with E. Jensen Avenue to the south. The setback area for the lines located along E. Church Avenue extends approximately 250 feet into the northern boundary of the site and the setback for the line located along E. Jensen Avenue extends 100 feet into the southern boundary of the site.

The California Department of Education may grant exemptions to the power line standard. The exemptions fall into two categories. First, a “Limited Activity” exemption may be granted when a school district agrees that uses within the required power line setback area will limited to parking; bus and parent drop off/loading areas; driveways, access roads, and sidewalks; landscaping; and similar uses.

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Second, an “Unrestricted Activity” exemption may be granted. This type of exemption would not restrict the uses allowed within the required setback area. The documentation required to support an unrestricted exemption is considerably greater than for a limited activity exemption.

Regardless of the type of exemption requested, the California Department of Education will require the District to address the following questions:

- Is it necessary for the school district to acquire a site near the easement?
- Are other options available?
- Has the school district contacted and discussed with the utility company any plans to (a) increase the voltage of the transmission lines; or (b) build other towers on the easement?
- Is the line a transmission line or distribution line?

The District could respond to the questions as follows:

- It is necessary for the District to acquire a site near the easement because the District needs a new high school and middle school to serve adequately the existing and projected high school and middle school enrollment within the southeast Fresno growth area and no other potentially suitable sites are available.
- Based on the *SUSD Second High School General Location Study* it was determined that the southeast Fresno area would be the most appropriate for the District’s new high school and middle school. While a site with no adjacent transmission lines could potentially be located in the Sanger area, the greater population growth potential in southeast Fresno and the lack of a SUSD high school in the District’s southeast Fresno area make locating a new high school in Sanger an unviable option.
- PG&E has been contacted and does intend to increase the voltage of the 70kV transmission line located along E. Church Avenue from 70kV to 115kV in 2010. The voltage increase will not involve the construction of new power poles or towers. The California Department of Education setback requirement for 70 kV and 115 kV lines is the same (100 feet); therefore, no additional setback area would be required when the voltage is increased.
- All of the lines described above are transmission lines.

Based upon the preceding information and assuming the California Department of Education would grant at least a “Limited Access” exemption, the location of the transmission lines described above may not preclude development of a high school and middle school on Sites A through D. Moreover, the location and depths of the power line setback areas on Sites A through D should not pose significant constraints to developing an efficient high school and middle school site layout. The setback area could be used for landscaping, access, loading, and parking, as typically permitted under a “Limited Access” exemption.

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## ***Railroads***

*Standard:* If the proposed site is within 1,500 feet of a railroad track easement, a safety study shall be done by a competent professional trained in assessing cargo manifest, frequency, speed, and schedule of railroad traffic, grade, curves, type and condition of track, need for sound or safety barriers, need for pedestrian and vehicle safeguards at railroad crossings, presence of high pressure gas lines near the tracks that could rupture in the event of a derailment, preparation of an evacuation plan. In addition to the analysis, possible and reasonable mitigation measure must be identified.

*Evaluation:* The northern portion of Site B<sub>HIS</sub> is within 1,500 feet of a San Joaquin Valley Railroad (SJVR) mainline railroad track which runs along the alignment of E. California Avenue. According to a Railroad Safety Study prepared for a proposed elementary school in southeast Fresno, two trains operate daily on the railroad, one coming from Exeter that arrives in Fresno during the late afternoon, and the other returning to Exeter that leaves Fresno during the late evening hours. The trains have approximately 15 to 25 cars and generally travel at a maximum speed of 25 miles per hour.

A railroad safety study would have to be performed to determine if the railroad would pose any hazards for a high school on Site B<sub>HIS</sub> and how these hazards might be mitigated. The California Department of Education has approved school sites within 1,500 feet of a railroad track easement where the safety study has determined that significant hazards do not exist or can be effectively mitigated.

The other sites are more than 1,500 feet from a railroad track easement. A safety study would not be required for these sites.

## ***Flooding***

*Standard:* The site shall not be within an area of flood or dam flood inundation unless the cost of mitigating the flood or inundation impact is reasonable.

*Evaluation:* Based upon the National Flood Insurance Program Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) (Map Nos. 06019C2130H and 06019C2135H) prepared by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, all of the sites are within an area categorized as “Zone X – Other Areas.”<sup>2</sup> As none of the sites are within a flood prone area, no further evaluation of this topic is required.

Based upon the dam inundation maps prepared by the State of California, Office of Emergency Services, none of the sites are within an area of dam flood inundation.

## ***Site Acquisition Costs and Complications***

*Standard:* The cost and complications of the following shall be considered in the site selection process and should not result in undue delays or unreasonable costs consistent with State Allocation Board standards:

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<sup>2</sup> “Zone X-Other Areas” is defined as follows: Areas determined to be outside the 0.2% annual chance floodplain.

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1. Distance of utilities to the site, availability and affordability of bringing utilities to the site.
  2. Site preparation including grading, drainage, demolition, hazardous cleanup, including cleanup of indigenous material such as serpentine rock, and off-site development of streets, curbs, gutters and lights.
  3. Eminent domain, relocation costs, severance damage, title clearance and legal fees.
  4. Long-term high landscaping or maintenance costs.
  5. Existence of any wildlife habitat that is on a protected or endangered species list maintained by a state or federal agency, existence of any wetlands, natural waterways, or areas that may support migratory species, or evidence of any environmentally sensitive vegetation.

*Evaluation:* Based upon a review of City of Fresno sewer and water facilities available near the sites, no significant differences should exist among Sites B through D in relation to the availability and affordability of bringing sewer and water services to the sites. These sites are within the City of Fresno's existing urban service area. The provision of sewer and water facilities to Site A, however, would be more costly. The area south of Jensen Avenue is within the SEGA Plan area, and urban infrastructure does not currently exist. Sewer service will need to be extended from the southwest from the vicinity of North and Clovis Avenues. The extension of water infrastructure would also be more extensive compared to the area north of Jensen Avenue.

Based upon a review of existing and planned Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District (FMFCD) flood control facilities, no significant differences should exist among Sites B through D in relation to the availability and affordability of storm water drainage. Site A, however, is not within the current boundaries of FMFCD. Drainage facilities would be planned as part of the SEGA plan process.

Site preparation costs, including a determination of any hazardous materials remediation costs, cannot be estimated until further research is conducted on the preferred site.

Except as related to site size, significant differences should not exist among Site B, C, and D for grading and site drainage costs. Drainage costs are potentially greater with Site A because no drainage infrastructure currently exists in the area surrounding Site A. All of the sites are generally level, with no significant landforms.

Demolition costs would be higher for Sites C and D because they contain four and six single family structures, respectively. The other two sites have 3 or less single family structures. The existence of underground or other structures that cannot be seen on aerial photography or through windshield surveys could change this conclusion.

Street and intersection improvements, including street widening, curbs, gutters, sidewalks, and other facilities would be required for all the sites. The extent of these improvements cannot be determined until site-specific traffic and engineering studies have been completed and the City of Fresno's street improvement requirements have

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been established. To the extent the amount of public street frontage along a site influences street-related improvements and costs, Site C would have the most street frontage (5,180 for C<sub>HS</sub> and 2,590 for C<sub>MS</sub> for a total of 7,770 feet), followed by Site B (5,150 for B<sub>HS</sub> and 2,590 for B<sub>MS</sub> for a total of 7,740 feet), and Site D (7,475 feet). Sunnyside Avenue would need to be constructed along the western segment of Site A, which, when added to the existing Jensen and Fowler Avenue frontage, would result in a total street frontage of 6,150 feet.

The extent to which the District may have to use eminent domain to assemble a site, pay relocation costs to residents and business on a site, or pay severance damages is normally determined after a preferred site has been selected and property owners have been contacted. In reviewing the sites, however, Site D has considerably more property owners and residential development than the other sites, followed by Site C, which increases probability that these types of issues may arise.

Site D encompasses one approved tentative tract map (TM5552). The city has not yet approved a final map for this subdivision. According to City of Fresno records, this tentative tract map will expire in June 2011 unless an extension is requested by the subdivider. None of the other sites encompass an active tentative tract map.

None of the sites would require dividing.

Estimating title clearance and legal fees is not feasible at this time.

None of the sites appear to have physical features that would lead to long-term high landscaping or maintenance costs.

A biological resources study would be performed for the preferred site during the California Environmental Quality Act compliance process. Because all of the sites have been in agricultural use for years and residential development has occurred on several of them, it is unlikely that any of the sites provide significant habitat for protected or endangered species or contain wetlands or environmentally sensitive vegetation. No natural waterways exist on the sites.

### **Further Research Required**

- A preliminary title report must be prepared to determine the existence of any easements on the preferred site.
- A Phase I Environmental Site Assessment and/or Preliminary Endangerment Assessment must be prepared for the preferred high school and middle school site to determine if safety-related conditions exist on or near the site. These conditions include but are not limited to:
  - Current or historical activities on or near the site that may have resulted in significant impacts from hazardous substances or petroleum products;
  - The site is a current or former hazardous waste disposal site or solid waste disposal site or a hazardous substance release site;



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- The site contains pipelines that carry hazardous substances, materials, or wastes; and
  - The site is within one-quarter mile of facilities, including but not limited to, freeways and other busy traffic corridors, large agricultural operations, and rail yards that might emit hazardous air emissions, or handle hazardous or extremely hazardous materials, substances, or waste.
  - A Geological and Environmental Hazards Report must be prepared for the preferred high school and middle school site to evaluate the potential for any seismic or geologic hazards on the site, including but not limited to:
    - Active earthquake faults or fault traces;
    - Moderate to high liquefaction or landslides; and
    - High pressure pipelines within 1,500 feet.

The California Environmental Quality Act process must be completed to determine if a high school and middle school on the preferred site would have any significant impacts on the environment. Environmental conditions that would be addressed through the CEQA process include but may not be limited to: aesthetics, agricultural resources, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, noise, traffic, and public services and utilities.

## **Recommendation for Preferred Site**

This section summarizes the significant advantages and disadvantages of the four potential sites and presents a recommendation as to the preferred school site.

### ***Site A***

*Advantages:* Sufficient size (108 gross acres) to accommodate both the high school and middle school on a single contiguous site; rectangular, proportionate shape; limited existing development and land ownership (2 single family residences and 3 owners).

*Disadvantages:* Depending on the timing of adjacent development, construction costs for the portion of Sunnyside Avenue adjacent to the site may have to be paid for entirely by the District; most students would have to cross an expressway (E. Jensen Avenue) to reach the site; urban services would have to be extended a substantial distance to reach the site.

### ***Site B***

*Advantages:* Sufficient size (117.3 gross acres; 77.9 and 39.4 acres, respectively, for the high school and middle school sites); rectangular and proportionate in shape; adequate major street access; urban services available; Site B<sub>MS</sub> is consistent with the school site designation of the *2025 Fresno General Plan*; limited existing development and land ownership (1 single family residence and 2 landowners).

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*Disadvantages:* Separated high school and middle school sites (the District prefers both schools to be located on one contiguous site). Site B<sub>HS</sub> is located within 1,500 feet of an active railroad track easement; the proposed football stadium and high school on Site B<sub>HS</sub> could conflict with the existing residential neighborhoods located adjacent to the site due to aesthetic, noise, parking and other issues; would require more street and intersection improvements than the other sites given the extent of public street frontage located adjacent to the site (7,740 feet).

### ***Site C***

*Advantages:* Sufficient size (117 gross acres; 78 and 39 acres respectively for the high school and middle school sites); rectangular and proportionate shape; adequate major street access; urban services available; and Site C<sub>MS</sub> is consistent with the school site designation of the 2025 Fresno General Plan.

*Disadvantages:* Separated high school and middle school sites (the District prefers both schools to be located on one contiguous site); consists of six parcels with three landowners; would require removal of four single family residences, which could result in greater costs associated with the potential presence of hazardous materials (i.e. building materials containing asbestos, septic systems, etc.); Site C<sub>HS</sub> encompasses one active tentative tract map.

### ***Site D***

*Advantages:* Sufficient size (116 gross acres) to accommodate both the high school and middle school on one contiguous site; rectangular, proportionate shape; adequate major street access; urban services available.

*Disadvantages:* Consists of nine parcels with five landowners; requires removal of six single family residences, which could result in greater costs associated with the potential presence of hazardous materials (i.e. building materials containing asbestos, septic systems, etc.); a large electrical transmission line setback area exists along the site's border with E. Church Avenue (the buffer area extends approximately 250 from the edge of E. Church Avenue into the site); Site D encompasses one active tentative tract map.

## **Recommendation**

It is recommended that Site D be selected as the preferred school site. For the financial and educational reasons stated previously in this study, the District prefers that the high school and middle school be located on one contiguous site. Sites B and C would not accomplish this. While Site A would accomplish this, its location south of Jensen Avenue is problematic as most students would have cross Jensen Avenue to reach the school and city services would have to be extended a significant distance to the site.

Another favorable factor for Site D is the presence of a Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District (FMFCD) retention basin adjacent to Site D. The potential exists for the District and FMFCD to work cooperatively to design and develop the retention basin for secondary public uses such as green space, playgrounds, baseball diamonds, and soccer

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fields. This is a favorable situation as the new high school and middle school could utilize these facilities for its recreational and physical education programs.

The large size and shape of Site D provides the ability to locate and design the proposed football stadium and agricultural education facility in a manner that is less likely to create potentially adverse light, noise, and odor issues for existing and future residences (these issues will be evaluated further under the California Environmental Quality Act process).

The recommendation of this study is subject to the understanding that the further research outlined in the study must be completed to determine if Site D (or another site) fully complies with District and California Department of Education school site selection standards. This research should be undertaken after the District has considered the information in this study and has identified a preferred site (or sites) for further investigation.

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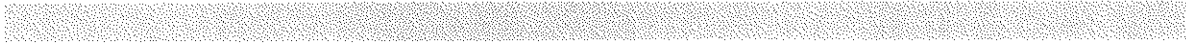
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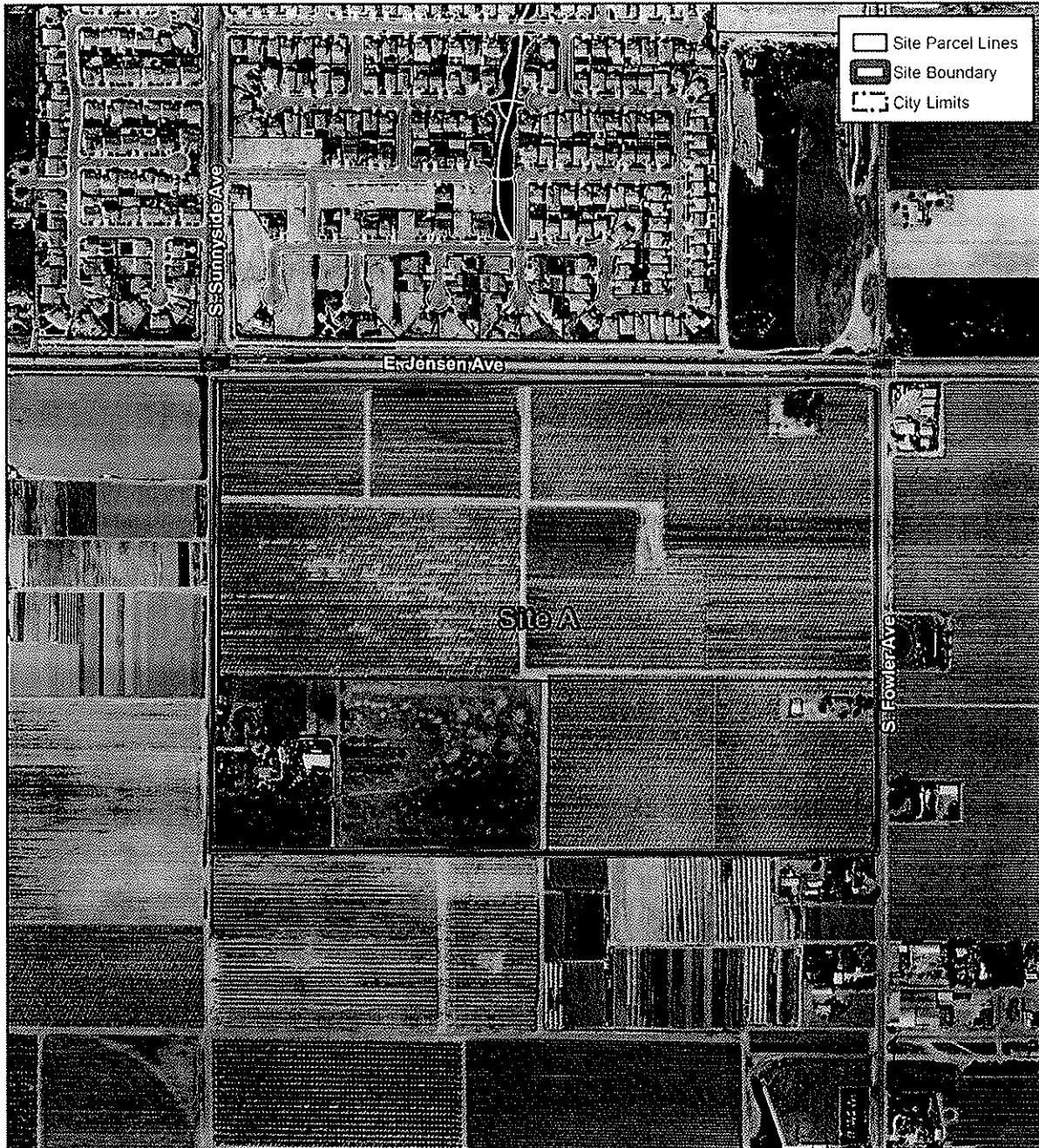


# **Appendix**

## **Sites A through D**

### **Aerial Photographs**





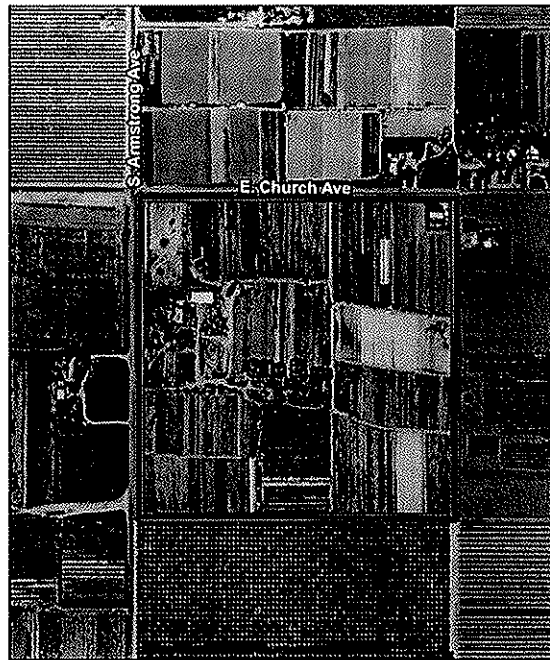
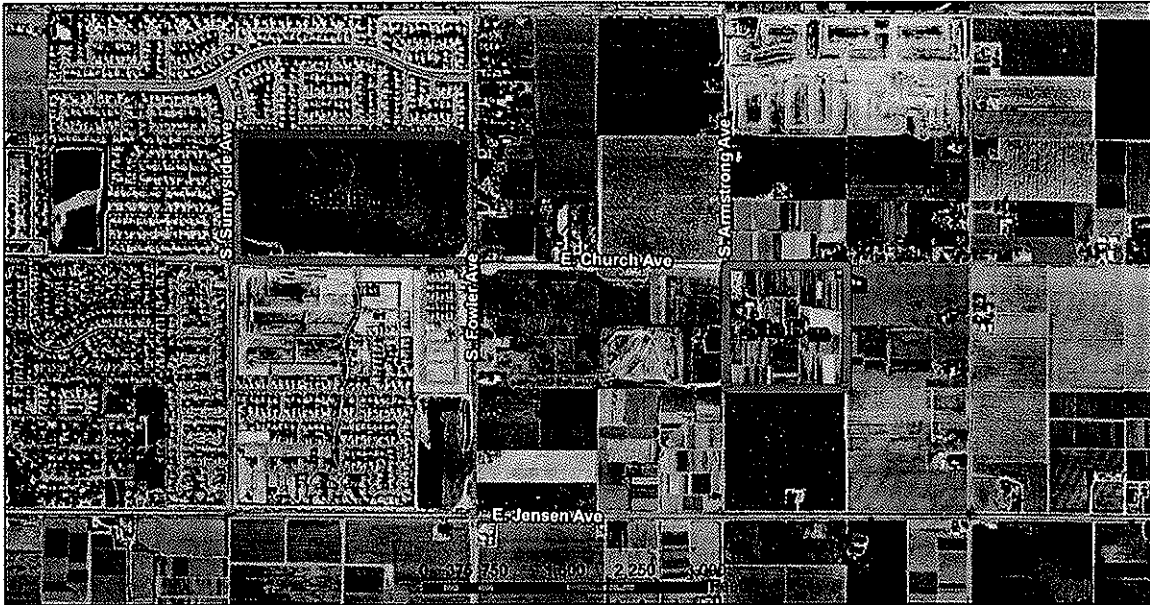
Sources: City of Fresno GIS, Paoli & Odell, Inc., DigitalGlobe, Inc. (Aerial Photograph taken March 2009)



0 187.5 375 750 1,125 1,500 Feet




Site A  
Aerial Photograph



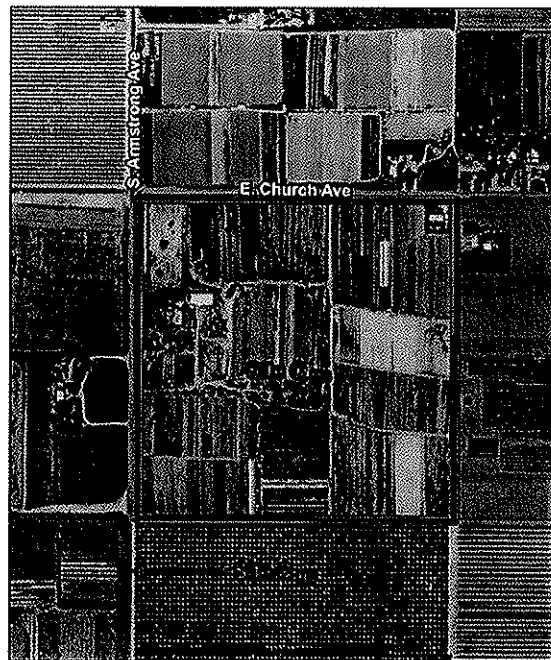
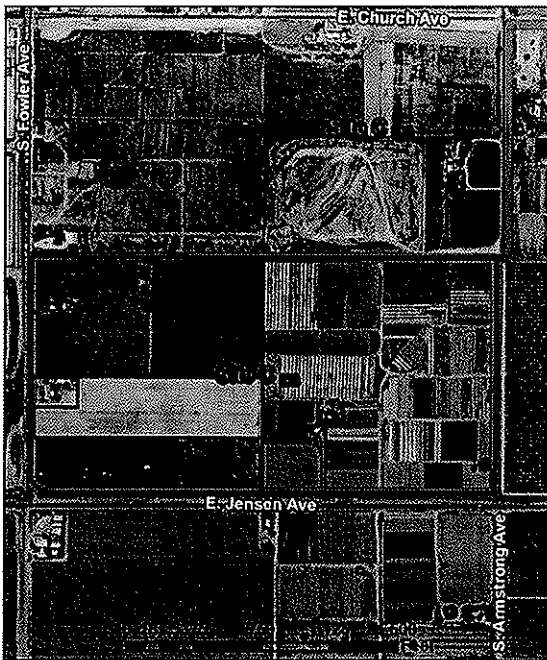
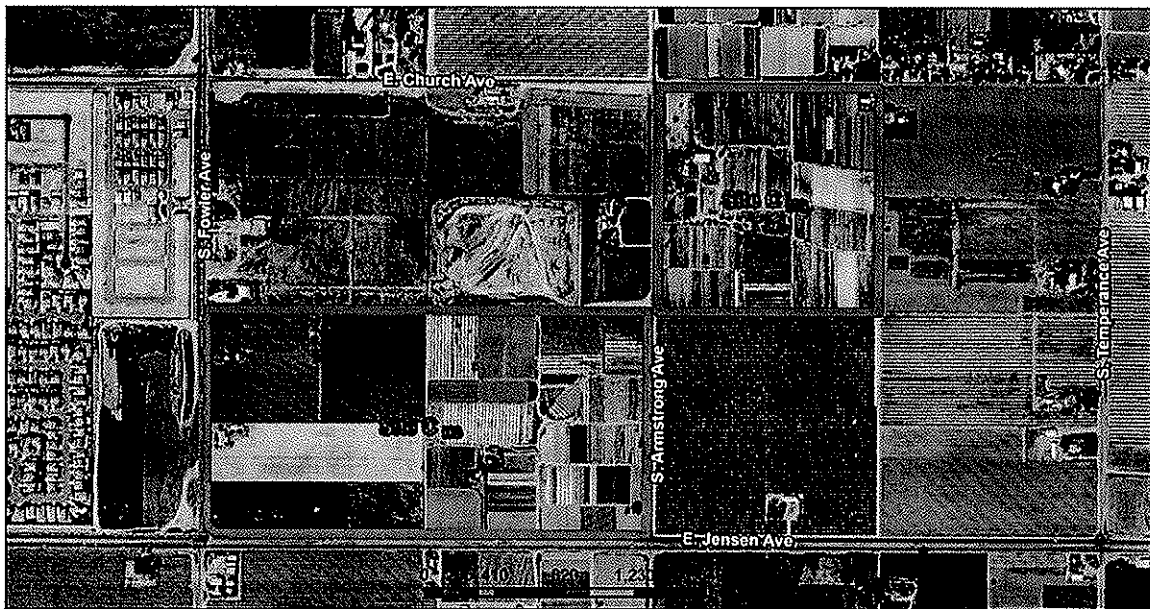


Sources: City of Fresno GIS, Paoli & Odell, Inc., DigitalGlobe, Inc. (Aerial Photograph taken March 2009)






-  Site Parcel Lines
-  Site Boundaries
-  City Limits

**Site B**  
**Aerial Photograph**



Sources: City of Fresno GIS, Paoli & Odell, Inc., DigitalGlobe, Inc. (Aerial Photograph taken March 2009)



-  Site Parcel Lines
-  Site Boundaries
-  City Limits

## Site C Aerial Photograph



Sources: City of Fresno GIS, Paoli & Odell, Inc., DigitalGlobe, Inc. (Aerial Photograph taken March 2009)



0 200 400 800 1,200 1,600 Feet

Site D  
Aerial Photograph